

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

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DELEGATE JOHN COSGROVE, Vice Chair
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VIRGINIA HOUSING COMMISSION

Meeting Summary

Common Interest Communities Work Group House Room D General Assembly Building June 8, 2010, 1:00 P.M.

Members Present: Senator Mary Margaret Whipple (Chair), Senator Mamie Locke, Delegate John A. Cosgrove, Delegate David Bulova, Melanie Thompson, Janice Burgess, Mike Inman, Ron Kirby, Barrett Hardiman, Pia Trigiani, Jerry Wright, Trisha Henshaw, Heather Gillespie, Pamela Coerse, Joseph Hudgins

Staff Present: Elizabeth Palen, Jillian Malizio

I. Welcome and call to order—Senator Mary Margaret Whipple, *Chair*

- The meeting was called to order at 1:11 PM

II. Common Interest Communities Board, Update

- **Trisha L. Henshaw**, *Executive Director Common Interest Community Board*
 - Delivered an update on the Common Interest Community Board (CICB) activities since July 1, 2008. Including meetings, regulatory activities, and other initiatives. See handout.
- **Heather Gillespie**, *Common Interest Community, Ombudsperson*,
 - Reported on current complaint statistics. See handout.
 - A series of time-share complaints have been consolidated into a formal complaint and will be heard on July 9, 2010.
- **Delegate Bulova**—*With respect to complaints that have been filed and closed can you touch on how many were favorable and unfavorable. Which ones' ended up being not actionable due to lack of jurisdiction?*
 - **Heather Gillespie**—I would say easily 50% are not actionable because we don't have jurisdiction. Many people contact the office because they are looking for someone who can offer legal advice. Of the remaining 50% remaining probably 35% are complaints I do pursue—I usually end up speaking to someone in the association to learn what the problem is. This involvement lets the association know they are being watched and
- **Senator Whipple**—*In the future I would be interested if you could provide us with information on the kind of complaints that you are getting.*

DELEGATE JOHN A. COSGROVE
DELEGATE ROSALYN R. DANCE
DELEGATE DAVID BULOVA
DELEGATE DANIEL W. MARSHALL, III
DELEGATE G. GLENN ODER

SENATOR MAMIE E. LOCKE
SENATOR JOHN C. WATKINS
SENATOR MARY MARGARET WHIPPLE

F. GARY GARCZYNSKI
T. K. SOMANATH
MELANIE S. THOMPSON

III. HB 348—Common Interest Communities Board; increase in annual assessment (Watts, 2010)

- **Delegate Vivian E. Watts**
 - See handout—Inequity of Capping Annual CIC State Management Fund Assessments.
 - A serious inequity in the fact that there is a 1,000 dollar cap. Using the top number of units, making a hypothetical budget.
 - Anything over \$400 a year as an assessment, which is not large, the inequity begins. For example when you look at \$800 it is 2:1.
 - We should move the ceiling up to \$2,000. For large associations of 800 or more there is nothing wrong with \$2,000.
- **Senator Whipple**—*It's the larger associations that create more of the cost and on a per unit basis, it's the smaller units that pay more.*
- **Pia Trigiani**—*Heather, have you tracked where the complaints are coming from based on the size of the association?*
 - **Heather Gillespie**—*It's not just based on size, complexity is also a factor.*
- **Delegate Bulova**—*I understand what is going on here, the chart is based on the existing code provisions; did you do a chart on your proposed changes?*
 - **Delegate Watts**—*I started to but I decided to wait and get a better idea of whether the cap would be increased. Once the cap issue is addressed I would like to take it down to .05%.*
- **Delegate Whipple**—*Did you make a chart that shows the cap at \$2000?*
 - **Delegate Watts**—*No, I have not done that math.*
- **Pia Trigiani**—*The number of homes in the community does not correlate to the budget.*
- **Delegate Bulova**—*As to written records for HOA's, to what degree do you provide education and training on what should be included on those records. From experience some are good but others are unreliable.*
 - *If they're the true governing documents of the association we don't have a hand in it. If it deals with the upcoming complaint something on a general level would be feasible.*
- **Pia Trigiani**—*GAP report outlines what the records contain.*

IV. SB 221—Covenants regarding natural drying devices (Puller, 2010)

- **Senator Toddy Puller**
 - Bill only allows people to put up natural drying devices in their yard.
 - The bill is not retroactive; it only applies prospectively.
 - Still allows HOA to say where the drying device can be, the place, the duration, and the manner of placement.
 - Similar bills have passed in six or seven other states. People are becoming aware of green energy—dryers are one of the most energy consuming devices in the house.
 - Stories in the newspapers about neighbors who were feuding—one man shot and killed his neighbor for hanging his laundry out. (See attached).
- **Elizabeth Palen**—*During the Committee meeting during Session, they wanted to restrict the type of clothing that people could hang out to dry.*
 - *I guess it's an issue for some people to see their neighbor's undergarments.*

- **Pia Trigiani**—*Our concern is always with existing restrictive covenants. But by making it prospective, Senator Puller has resolved the issue.*

V. HB 349—Common Interest Community Board; provisional licenses for property managers (Toscano, 2010)

- **Rick Jones**, Real estate agent from Charlottesville
 - I am a manager of HOA's and have been for a long time and now I'm required to be licensed to do my job. Licensing is a daunting challenge, one that I did not receive notice of. The new licensing requirements were not published in newsletters or made widely available. The regulations are now hurting my ability to make a living.
 - CIC regulations favor the community association institute. In trying to figure out how to get licensed I learned out the CIC board only licensed firm, not individuals.
 - Some of my associates took licensing class; this class was taught by someone from Texas. No Virginia law was covered. The course is only given once next month costs over \$500 plus travel meals. Once you even pass it there is an application to take the exam and the exam costs \$300.
 - How can a company become licensed without going through CAI? I understand when the regulations were first past all of this was a quick fix—but after two years, it is still my only choice. It is time for CIC board to create other programs.
- **Tricia Henshaw**—*There was an article in the real estate newsletter—A big emphasis has been put on outreach.*
- **Senator Whipple**—*It would behoove the Board to know that there are alternatives and different paths for people to take.*

VI. HB 1330—Real Estate Time-Share Act; right to surrender (Cosgrove, 2010)

- **Delegate Cosgrove**—This bill is going to be very complex, I have asked the Chair for separate working group.

VII. Public Comment

- **Elizabeth Palen**—If any one is interested in being part of a group to discuss HB 1330 please let me know and they can work on the issue.

VIII. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 2:32.

Inequity of Capping Annual CIC State Management Fund Assessments														
Reported:	Hypothetical:													
distribution of CIC's	# of units	budget @ \$200	0.05%	per unit	budget @ \$400	0.05%	per unit	budget @ \$500	0.05%	per unit				
40.40%	1888	1- 50	\$10,000	\$10.00	\$	0.20	\$20,000	\$10.00	\$	0.20	\$25,000	\$12.50	\$	0.25
22.30%	1042	51- 100	\$20,000	\$10.00	\$	0.10	\$40,000	\$20.00	\$	0.20	\$50,000	\$25.00	\$	0.25
20.20%	945	101- 200	\$40,000	\$20.00	\$	0.10	\$80,000	\$40.00	\$	0.20	\$100,000	\$50.00	\$	0.25
12.30%	573	201- 500	\$100,000	\$50.00	\$	0.10	\$200,000	\$100.00	\$	0.20	\$250,000	\$125.00	\$	0.25
2.80%	130	501- 1000	\$200,000	\$100.00	\$	0.10	\$400,000	\$200.00	\$	0.20	\$500,000	\$250.00	\$	0.25
2.00%	92	1001- 5000	\$1,000,000	\$500.00	\$	0.10	\$2,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$2,500,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20
0.10%	6	Over 5000	\$1,000,000	\$500.00	\$	0.10	\$2,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$2,500,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20
			budget @ \$800	0.05%	per unit		budget @ \$1,200	0.05%	per unit		budget @ \$2,000	0.05%	per unit	
			\$40,000	\$20.00	\$	0.40	\$60,000	\$30.00	\$	0.60	\$100,000	\$50.00	\$	1.00
			\$80,000	\$40.00	\$	0.40	\$120,000	\$60.00	\$	0.60	\$200,000	\$100.00	\$	1.00
			\$160,000	\$80.00	\$	0.40	\$240,000	\$120.00	\$	0.60	\$400,000	\$200.00	\$	1.00
			\$400,000	\$200.00	\$	0.40	\$600,000	\$300.00	\$	0.60	\$1,000,000	\$500.00	\$	1.00
			\$800,000	\$400.00	\$	0.40	\$1,200,000	\$600.00	\$	0.60	\$2,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	1.00
			\$4,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$6,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$10,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20
			\$4,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$6,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20	\$10,000,000	\$1,000.00	\$	0.20

Del Watts - HB348 - 6/8/10

Number of Home	Total Associations		Self Managed Associations		Non Self Managed Associations		Not Reported Associations*				
	Count	% of total	Count	% self managed	% of total	Count	% managed	% of total	Count	% not reported	% of total
1-50	1888	40.4%	862	61.1%	18.2%	1028	31.6%	22.0%	8	32.0%	0.2%
51-100	1042	22.3%	254	18.2%	5.4%	779	23.9%	16.7%	9	36.0%	0.2%
101-200	945	20.2%	169	12.1%	3.6%	770	23.6%	16.5%	6	24.0%	0.1%
201-500	573	12.3%	80	5.7%	1.7%	491	15.1%	10.5%	2	8.0%	0.0%
501-1000	130	2.8%	20	1.4%	0.4%	110	3.4%	2.4%	0	0.0%	0.0%
1001-5000	92	2.0%	17	1.2%	0.4%	75	2.3%	1.6%	0	0.0%	0.0%
5000+	6	0.1%	3	0.2%	0.1%	3	0.1%	0.1%	0	0.0%	0.0%
	4676	100.0%	1395	100.0%	29.8%	3256	100.0%	69.6%	25	100.0%	0.5%

*These associations did not report whether self-managed or managed by another party

Self Managed Associations	1395	29.8%
Non Self Managed Associations	3256	69.6%
Associations Not Reporting Mgmt. Info	25	0.5%



COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITY BOARD UPDATE BEFORE THE COMMON INTEREST COMMUNITIES WORK GROUP OF THE VIRGINIA HOUSING COMMISSION

CIC Board Primary Activities Since 7/1/08

- ❖ 12 regulatory actions (5 currently in process)
- ❖ 13 Board meetings
- ❖ 14 Committee meetings
- ❖ 5 manager application informal fact-finding conferences
 - 4 approved
 - 1 denied (subsequently approved by license agreement)
- ❖ 5 disciplinary actions (completed and in process)
 - Includes formal hearings (time-share), cease and desist order (condominium registration), consent order (association), and disciplinary informal fact-finding conference

CIC Board Regulations

- ❖ Common Interest Community Manager Regulations
 - Permanent regulations effective 4/1/10
 - Include license requirements for CIC managers (firms)
 - Criteria for training program approval
- ❖ Common Interest Community Management Information Fund
 - Effective May 15, 2009
 - Registration and renewal (annual reporting) requirements for associations
- ❖ Condominium Regulations
 - Effective July 9, 2009
 - Registration requirements for condominium projects
- ❖ Time-Share Regulations
 - Effective November 27, 2008
 - Registration requirements for time-share programs

Current Pending Regulatory Actions

- ❖ Common Interest Community Ombudsman Regulations
 - Proposed Stage
 - Currently undergoing Governor's review
 - Next step: Publish as proposed; 60 day public comment period
- ❖ Condominium Regulations
 - Fast-Track Regulatory Action to establish language governing return of assessment bonds and letters of credit to condominium declarant as required by the Condominium Act
 - Board adopted language on 6/3/10; pending submittal for executive branch review

- ❖ Common Interest Community Manager Regulations (employee certification provisions)
 - NOIRA Stage
 - Committee selected by Board developed draft regulations
 - Pending adoption as proposed by the CIC Board on 6/24/10
 - Next step: File as proposed and executive branch review after Board adoption
- ❖ Common Interest Community Manager Regulations
 - Exempt Action to correct Code citation that was no longer applicable after change during 2009 General Assembly Session
 - Currently undergoing public comment period
 - Next step: Effective July 1, 2010
- ❖ Common Interest Community Manager Regulations
 - ❖ Emergency Action to adopt language regarding temporary licenses pursuant to Senate Bill 474

Major Initiatives of the CIC Board

- ❖ Implementation of manager licensing requirements, with current priority on having regulations in place for employee certification by 7/1/11, and ensuring that provisional licensees apply in advance of 6/30/11 expiration date
- ❖ Increased outreach and education
- ❖ Reduce unregistered associations and unlicensed managers currently operating in Virginia
- ❖ Ensure CIC Management Recovery Fund reaches statutorily-required minimum of \$150,000 by 7/1/11

CIC Board Regulant Population

- ❖ As of 4/30/10 (figures from 4/30/09 in parentheses)
 - **33** Licensed CIC Managers (8)
 - **165** Provisionally Licensed CIC Managers (159)
 - **4,700** Registered Associations (4,191)
 - **97** Time-Share Programs (97)
 - **554** Condominium Projects (585)

Presented by:

Trisha L. Henshaw

Executive Director

Common Interest Community Board

Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation

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June 8, 2010



Complaint Statistics and Issues
Office of the Common Interest Community Ombudsman
June 8, 2010

The current complaint/file statistics as of June 1, 2010 are as follows:

- ◆475 (259/216) complaints filed since July 1, 2008
- ◆446 (233/213) complaint files have been closed
- ◆16 files are pending or not yet reviewed.
- ◆20 individual complaints have been consolidated into a single complaint and a formal hearing is pending.
- ◆1 condominium complaint resulted in an investigation. A consent order and an IFF are pending.
- ◆3 property management complaints regarding the same company have resulted in an investigation and an IFF.

- ◆21.21% are related to condominium owners' association
- ◆38.38% are related to property owners' associations
- ◆32.53% are related to time-shares
- ◆4.44% are related to management companies

- ◆23.61% are from Central Virginia
- ◆43.52% are from Northern Virginia
- ◆12.04% are from the Tidewater area of Virginia
- ◆12.96% are from the Southwestern region of Virginia
- ◆7.87% are from other states or countries (time-shares)

- ◆2413 (994/1419) phone calls received and returned
- ◆1691 (744/947) emails received and responded to

◆ Draft Ombudsman regulations were submitted in November 2009 and were just recently approved by the Secretary and are now waiting for approval by the Governor.

◆ A formal hearing resulting from complaints received by this office and the subsequent investigation performed by the CID investigatory staff will be held July 9, 2010.

◆ As noted above, several complaints have resulted in investigations by the investigation section staff. This has provided a tremendous learning opportunity for staff members who were unfamiliar with common interest communities. It also provided the Ombudsman the opportunity to better understand the investigation process for future potential investigations.

◆ Outreach efforts in the form of presentations and participation in panel discussions continues, with efforts being made to reach all parts of the Commonwealth. Currently compiling information for a web page and educational materials.

Submitted by:
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YAHOO! NEWS

PRINT

Back to story

U.S. residents fight for the right to hang laundry REUTERS

By Jon Hurdle
Wed Nov 18, 11:32 am ET

PERKASIE, Pennsylvania (Reuters) -- Carin Froehlich pegs her laundry to three clotheslines strung between trees outside her 18th-century farmhouse, knowing that her actions annoy local officials who have asked her to stop.

Froehlich is among the growing number of people across America fighting for the right to dry their laundry outside against a rising tide of housing associations who oppose the practice despite its energy-saving green appeal.

Although there are no formal laws in this southeast Pennsylvania town against drying laundry outside, a town official called Froehlich to ask her to stop drying clothes in the sun. And she received two anonymous notes from neighbors saying they did not want to see her underwear flapping about.

"They said it made the place look like trailer trash," she said, in her yard across the street from a row of neat, suburban houses. "They said they didn't want to look at my 'unmentionables.'"

Froehlich says she hangs her underwear inside. The effervescent 54-year-old is one of a growing number of Americans demanding the right to dry laundry on clotheslines despite local rules and a culture that frowns on it.

Their interests are represented by Project Laundry List, a group that argues people can save money and reduce carbon emissions by not using their electric or gas dryers, according to the group's executive director, Alexander Lee.

Widespread adoption of clotheslines could significantly reduce U.S. energy consumption, argued Lee, who said dryer use accounts for about 6 percent of U.S. residential electricity use.

Florida, Utah, Maine, Vermont, Colorado, and Hawaii have passed laws restricting the rights of local authorities to stop residents using clotheslines. Another five states are considering similar measures, said Lee, 35, a former lawyer who quit to run the non-profit group.

'RIGHT TO HANG'

His principal opponents are the housing associations such as condominiums and townhouse communities that are home to an estimated 60 million Americans, or about 20 percent of the population. About half of those organizations have 'no hanging' rules, Lee said, and enforce them with fines.

Carl Weiner, a lawyer for about 50 homeowners associations in suburban Philadelphia, said the no-hanging rules are usually included by the communities' developers along with regulations such as a ban on sheds or commercial vehicles.

The no-hanging rules are an aesthetic issue, Weiner said.

"The consensus in most communities is that people don't want to see everybody else's laundry."

He said opposition to clotheslines may ease as more people understand it can save energy and reduce greenhouse gases.

"There is more awareness of impact on the environment," he said. "I would not be surprised to see people questioning these restrictions."

For Froehlich, the "right to hang" is the embodiment of the American tradition of freedom.

"If my husband has a right to have guns in the house, I have a right to hang laundry," said Froehlich, who is writing a book on the subject.

Besides, it saves money. Line-drying laundry for a family of five saves \$83 a month in electric bills, she said.

Kevin Firth, who owns a two-bedroom condominium in a Dublin, Pennsylvania housing association, said he was fined \$100 by the association for putting up a clothesline in a common area.

"It made me angry and upset," said Firth, a 27-year-old carpenter. "I like having the laundry drying in the sun. It's something I have always done since I was a little kid."

(Editing by Mark Egan and Paul Simao)



"Meisberger, Michael CIV
DTIC Z"
<MMeisber@dtic.mil>
01/26/2010 02:11 PM

To <district36@sov.state.va.us>
CC
bcc
Subject Thank you so much!

Sen. Linda "Toddy" Puller,

I just read this short blurb:

Va Senate passes bill to allow clothes lines

By the Associated Press

January 26, 2010

RICHMOND, Va. - The Virginia Senate wants all homeowners to be able to air out their clean laundry.

By a 37-3 vote Tuesday, the Senate passed a bill that would prohibit homeowner's associations from banning residents from stringing up clothes lines to dry their garments.

Sen. Linda "Toddy" Puller said her bill was needed to combat energy-sucking clothes dryers. The bill would allow the organizations to set restrictions concerning the size and placement of the so-called natural drying devices.

A similar bill—calling them wind energy drying devices--made it out of the Senate last year but was defeated on the House floor.

--- End release ---

You have no idea how long I have been waiting for this. My homeowners association has been against me saving money and the environment for years. Thank you for keeping this bill alive and continuing to press forward with common sense. I think it's sad we have to have a law so people can't make a law but...thank you!

v/r

Michael Meisberger

FrederickNewsPost.com

Blowing in the wind: Clagett calls for more clotheslines

Originally published December 31, 2009

By Mac Tully

A Frederick County state delegate plans to reintroduce a bill to stop homeowners associations and local governments banning clotheslines.

Delegate Galen Clagett, a Democrat, said the bill is one of several he hopes to revive this year after it failed to win support in the last General Assembly session.

He hopes doing so would promote the use of clotheslines and help reduce the state's energy usage.

"That (clothes) dryer is a consumption pig; it takes a lot of electricity," Clagett said. "This is a way for everybody to do a little bit."

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates U.S. households used about 66 billion kilowatt-hours to operate clothes dryers in 2001, about 5.8 percent of total national energy consumption.

If Clagett's bill becomes law, associations would still be able to regulate where clotheslines are placed to keep them from being an eyesore.

The idea caught Clagett's attention because his commercial real estate business helps manage homeowners associations. In many cases, clotheslines are not allowed and homeowners have complained to his business, he said.

The bill was killed by the House Environmental Matters Committee last year, but Clagett said he is dedicated to the idea.

Gov. Martin O'Malley, a Democrat, has called for the state to reduce energy use by 15 percent by 2015. Clagett thinks the bill could further that goal.

"There's a saying in Annapolis: A good bill takes three to five years to pass, a bad bill passes in one year," Clagett said. "This is a good bill."

At a public hearing in Frederick earlier this month, Ian Frank testified in support of Clagett's bill.

Frank, a Frederick resident who designs and installs solar systems through his company, Chesapeake Energy Solutions, said the legislation will help residents harness the power of the sun.

Frank has previously served on the Lake Linganore homeowners association review committee, so he's familiar with such restrictions.

He said the state should be looking at ways to help consumers reduce energy consumption and tap into renewable sources.

In Frederick County, many homeowners associations ban clotheslines. Others, such as the Villages of Urbana, have joined the national movement promoting clotheslines by allowing their use, with some restrictions for aesthetic purposes.

AT A GLANCE

Delegate Galen Clagett, a Frederick Democrat, plans to reintroduce several other failed bills from last year. Those include:

- Banning phosphorus in lawn fertilizer for residential use.
- Setting up monitoring of septic tank pumping trucks to make sure the sewage is disposed of properly at a sewage treatment plant. The program would be funded by a Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund already in place. Its revenue comes from the flush tax, a fee for septic and sewer users.
- Requiring the use of hands-free devices for drivers using cell phones.

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The New York Times

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October 11, 2009

Debate Follows Bills to Remove Clotheslines Bans

By IAN URBINA

CANTON, Ohio — After taking a class that covered global warming last year, Jill Saylor decided to save energy by drying her laundry on a clothesline at her mobile home.

"I figured trailer parks were the one place left where hanging your laundry was actually still allowed," she said, standing in front of her tidy yellow mobile home on an impeccably manicured lawn.

But she was wrong. Like the majority of the 60 million people who now live in the country's roughly 300,000 private communities, Ms. Saylor was forbidden to dry her laundry outside because many people viewed it as an eyesore, not unlike storing junk cars in driveways, and a marker of poverty that lowers property values.

In the last year, however, state lawmakers in Colorado, Hawaii, Maine and Vermont have overridden these local rules with legislation protecting the right to hang laundry outdoors, citing environmental concerns since clothes dryers use at least 6 percent of all household electricity consumption.

Florida and Utah already had such laws, and similar bills are being considered in Maryland, North Carolina, Oregon and Virginia, clothesline advocates say.

The new laws have provoked a debate. Proponents argue they should not be prohibited by their neighbors or local community agreements from saving on energy bills or acting in an environmentally minded way. Opponents say the laws lifting bans erode local property rights and undermine the autonomy of private communities.

"It's already hard enough to sell a house in this economy," said Frank Rathbun, a spokesman for the national Community Associations Institute, an advocacy and education organization in Alexandria, Va., for community associations. "And when it comes to clotheslines, it should be up to each community association, not state lawmakers, to set rules, much like it is with rules involving parking, architectural guidelines or pets."

As much a cultural clash as a political and economic one, the issue is causing tensions as homeowners, landlords and property managers have traded nasty letters and threats of legal action.

"I think sheets dangling in the wind are beautiful if they're helping the environment," said Mary Lou Sayer, 88, who was told firmly by fellow residents at her condominium in Concord, N.H., that she could not hang her laundry outdoors after her daughter recently suggested she do so to save energy.

Richard Jacques, 63, president of the condominium's board, said he moved to the community specifically for its strict regulations. "Those rules are why when I look out my window I now see birds, trees and

flowers, not laundry," he said.

Driven in part by the same nostalgia that has restored the popularity of canning and private vegetable gardens, the right-to-dry movement has spawned an eclectic coalition.

"The issue has brought together younger folks who are more pro-environment and very older folks who remember a time before clotheslines became synonymous with being too poor to afford a dryer," said a Democratic lawmaker from Virginia, State Senator Linda T. Puller, who introduced a bill last session that would prohibit community associations in the state from restricting the use of "wind energy drying devices" — i.e., clotheslines.

At least eight states already limit the ability of homeowners associations to restrict the installation of solar-energy systems, and legal experts are debating whether clotheslines might qualify.

"It seems like such a mundane thing, hanging laundry, and yet it draws in all these questions about individual rights, private property, class, aesthetics, the environment," said Steven Lake, a British filmmaker who is releasing a documentary next May called "Drying for Freedom," about the clothesline debate in the United States.

The film follows the actual case of feuding neighbors in Verona, Miss., where the police say one man shot and killed another last year because he was tired of telling the man to stop hanging his laundry outside.

Jeanne Bridgforth, a real estate agent in Richmond, Va., said that while she had no personal opinion on clotheslines, most of her clients were not thrilled with the idea of seeing their neighbors' underwear blowing in the breeze.

She recalled how she was unable to sell a beautifully restored Victorian home in the Church Hill neighborhood of Richmond because it looked out onto a neighbor's laundry hanging from a second-story back porch. In June, the house went into foreclosure.

"Where does it end?" Ms. Bridgforth said of the legislative push to prevent housing associations from forbidding clotheslines.

Dwight Merriam, a lawyer from Hartford and an expert in zoning law, dismissed this concern.

"This is not some slippery slope toward government micromanaging of private agreements," Mr. Merriam said, adding, however, that for these state laws to succeed they need to exempt existing agreements.

One of the biggest barriers to change, he said, is that most housing compacts that were written more than 30 or so years ago allow rules to be altered only if 80 percent to 100 percent of the association members attend a meeting and vote, which rarely happens.

Ms. Saylor, from the mobile home park, said, "Pressure makes a difference." After a petition calling on the owner of the property where she lived to reverse the prohibition against line drying laundry, she said, the owner recently acquiesced.

But Alexander Lee, a lawyer in Concord, N.H., who runs a Web site, Project Laundry List to promote hanging clothes to dry, said the actual electricity consumption by dryers was probably three times as much as federal estimates because those estimates did not take into account actual use at laundromats and in

multifamily homes.

Change promises to be slow, said Mr. Lee, 35. "There are a lot of kids these days who don't even know what a clothespin is," he said. "They think it's a potato chip clip."

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